

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
EXTENSION SERVICE  
Washington 25, D. C.

August 1, 1946

Immediate action requested

TO ALL STATE DIRECTORS OF EXTENSION:

Subject: Full Use of Domestic Workers Before  
Certifying for Foreign Workers

The supply of domestic agricultural workers is improving very rapidly in many sections of the country. A recent example of this is the current small grain harvest in the Dakotas. During the 1945 season a total of 7,202 interstate transported workers and foreign workers were required for the grain harvest in the two States. As recently as two weeks ago plans were being pushed to recruit and transport a minimum of 1,686 workers from Mississippi, Arkansas, and Oklahoma areas to the Dakotas for the grain harvest. Today the harvest is well under way with the aid of only 782 transported interstate workers and 400 Mexican Nationals. Indications are that the workers already on the ground or en route will be adequate to complete the harvest. The number of interstate workers available for recruitment and transportation to the Dakota grain fields this year was, of course, much larger than in any previous year.

The preceding illustration emphasizes the need for all of us to be constantly on guard to see that the promise the Secretary of Agriculture made to the Congress in October 1945 is kept.

"Not only do we expect the growers to put on a campaign to recruit returning veterans and people returning from other employment, but the Department itself expects to contribute along that direction, and I know it is the intent of the Department to hold back this program as much as it possibly can and give every possible chance for American citizens to find this type of farm employment if they desire it."

(Secretary Anderson— House Hearings  
on 1946 Farm Labor appropriations)

Since certifications for foreign workers are to be made to the Labor Branch only when labor requirements cannot be met from domestic labor sources, it is imperative that certifications for foreign workers be scrutinized with great care during the weeks just ahead. Obviously the State Director of Extension cannot know of the possibilities of supplying the needs of his State through recruitment of domestic workers in some other State. It is the responsibility of the Federal Extension Service to make such determinations.

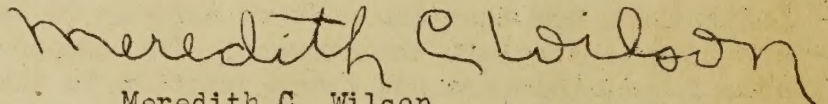
To enable us to carry out the instructions of the Secretary's office, please have your State Farm Labor Supervisor forward to this office

immediately copies of all certifications made to date for foreign workers to be delivered to your State between now and the end of the year. Before a new certification for foreign workers is submitted to the Labor Branch, this office should be contacted to determine the possibility of supplying the needed workers from domestic interstate sources.

In addition to the several thousand available interstate workers who are not being utilized in the small grain harvest this year, indications are that many more experienced agricultural workers are interested in work in other States, particularly in fruit, canning crop, and potato producing areas. In contrast to previous years, these workers can be available throughout the fall harvest period. It will be less easy to interest these workers in harvesting sugar beets, but that possibility should not be overlooked.

I am sure you agree that effective steps should be taken to avoid the danger of American citizens being deprived of work they desire to perform because of the presence in an area of Nationals of another country. Our record in that respect has been free of criticisms so far this year. A little extra care during the next few weeks will insure its remaining so.

Very truly yours,



Meredith C. Wilson  
Deputy Director of Extension  
Farm Labor Program

(Copy to State Farm Labor Supervisors)